

TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO STUDY THE SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING CASTLE NUGENT FARMS LOCATED ON ST. CROIX, VIRGIN ISLANDS, AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

SEPTEMBER 7, 2004.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. POMBO, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 2663]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 2663) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating Castle Nugent Farms located on St. Croix, Virgin Islands, as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 2663 is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating Castle Nugent Farms located on St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, as a Unit of the National Park System.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Located on the island of St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands, Castle Nugent Farms is one of 264 cotton and sugar plantations that were formed on the island after 1733 when the Danish West Indies Company purchased the island from France. Historians believe Castle Nugent Farms, which includes a 17th century Danish estate house and a number of structures, is one of the oldest ongoing cattle ranches in the West Indies specializing in Senepol breed of cattle. Today, Castle Nugent, the largest parcel of privately-held land in the U.S. Virgin Islands, is a genetic bank for the Senepol breed. The shores of the farm also include large coral reefs and turtle and heron nesting sites.

The National Park Service study authorized by H.R. 2663 would determine the suitability, feasibility and national significance of establishing the Castle Nugent Farm Estate as a unit of the Park System.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 2663 was introduced on July 8, 2003, by Delegate Donna Christensen (D-VI). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands. On March 25, 2004, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill. On April 22, 2004, the Subcommittee met to mark up the bill. No amendments were offered and the bill was forwarded to the full Resources Committee by unanimous consent. On May 5, 2004, the full Resources Committee met to consider the bill. No amendments were offered and the bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. This bill does not authorize funding and therefore, clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives does not apply.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, May 12, 2004.

Hon. RICHARD W. POMBO,
Chairman, Committee on Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 2663, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating Castle Nugent Farms located on St. Croix, Virgin Islands, as a unit of the National Park System.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

ELIZABETH M. ROBINSON
(For Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director).

Enclosure.

H.R. 2663—A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating Castle Nugent Farms located on St. Croix, Virgin Islands, as a unit of the National Park System

H.R. 2663 would direct the Department of the Interior to study the feasibility and suitability of designating the approximately 1,400-acre site of Castle Nugent Farms on St. Croix as a unit of the National Park System. The department would be required to report its findings and recommendations within three years of receiving funds for the study.

Assuming the availability of appropriated funds, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2663 would cost the federal government about \$300,000 over the next three years to complete the required study and report. Enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues.

H.R. 2663 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.